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AUTHOR Zoglin, Mary Lou
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ABSTRACT

This document explores state-level involvement in the governance of postsecondary education, particularly in those states which use coordinating boards to govern their institutions. Rising enrollments and costs of the 1960's, concern with more effective resource use in the 1970's, and the influence of federal aid programs have combined to accelerate the degree of state control of local institutions. While little firm evidence exists to substantiate the value of such control, the advantages and disadvantages of increased centralization and control are strongly argued by partisans on both sides. State control is exercised through the budget process, program management, and planning--functions that are shared, albeit unequally, by the governor, the legislature, and coordinating agencies, each with conflicting and overlapping authority and powers. The trend toward state control shows no sign of abating, and, if unchecked, it will further circumscribe the autonomy of colleges and universities. Attempts to bring about change will require accurate identification of the role of each agency of state government in the coordination/control process, agreement on essential elements of institutional and local autonomy, reversal of the trend toward increased state control or stabilization of the status quo, simplification of current state control mechanisms, and promotion of institutional autonomy within multi-unit systems. A bibliography is attached. (JDS)

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ED140896

Management Report

77/7 UNDERSTANDING AND INFLUENCING THE STATE ROLE IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

By
MARY LOU ZOGLIN
Member, Board of Governors
California Community Colleges

Your Professional Association

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

JC 770 340

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS
De Anza College ■ *Cupertino, CA 95014* ■ *[408] 446-3326*

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Robert DeHart
sident, De Anza College
E PRESIDENT
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Administrators, probably more than any other group, are alarmed about the inexorable movement of community college governance toward state cominance, if not complete control. But can anything be done about this trend?

Mary Lou Zoglin thinks so--but first we must understand the system if we are to change it. This paper thoroughly explores our present condition and where we are likely to go if we don't intervene. She even recommends some forms that intervention might take.

This Report is the longest one we have published, but it is well worth a careful reading by all community college educators. Mary Lou cuts through the maze of Sacramento bureaucracy to review and to analyze the control exercised in the critical power centers. We administrators are now faced with not only learning to understand the system, we must find ways of using the system to change the system. And there are ways of doing that Mary Lou believes.

"Community" in community colleges may soon refer to our geography only and have nothing to do with our governance if we don't attempt a reversal of present trends.

A. Robert DeHart
President

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June, 1977

A PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTED TO . . .
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. . . IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

UNDERSTANDING AND INFLUENCING

THE STATE ROLE IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Introduction

"Everybody complains about it but nobody does anything about it!" With apologies to the weather, this adage accurately describes the situation with regard to the erosion of institutional autonomy in postsecondary education. A second point of similarity is that the latter seems to be as far beyond the power of interested parties to control as is the weather.

This seemingly inexorable trend towards state control of postsecondary education is occurring despite fervent proclamations of devotion to local and institutional autonomy on the part of all concerned. Governor Brown of California, for example, declares that state government has gotten too big, that power must be returned to local authorities; coordinating agencies insist that their actions are not designed to threaten autonomy; legislators proclaim their devotion to the principle of local control; trustees and teachers and administrators deplore their inability to respond to institutional needs as they see them; and citizens in responding to polls indicate their overwhelming desire for more local and less state control over their schools.

Despite this widespread agreement as to the merits of local and institutional autonomy, events are marching steadily in the opposite direction. One reason for this is that, in each individual situation, the reasons for increasing state control always seem compelling. Autonomy comes in a poor second. Taxpayers associations and conservative legislators, normally ardent advocates of "small government", rush to support a new state office to avoid duplication if it promises to save dollars; liberal lawmakers and faculty members join with unions to regulate working conditions within the colleges; legislators cannot resist the temptation to beef up an agency's enforcement powers in order to correct a specific abuse brought to their attention by constituents; the governor and his finance office support limitations on the colleges' power to decide on course offerings in order to save money; and institutional trustees and administrators willingly sell their birthright for increased state financial support.

It thus becomes clear why the proponents of college autonomy are unable to marshal their forces to fight these measures. In many cases, as Pogo said, "We have met the enemy and he is us." Among the causes of this apparent inability to act in their own interest are apathy, a feeling that "the bell tolls only for thee", and failure to realize the cumulative effect of individual measures on institutional autonomy.

Even assuming that these obstacles can be overcome, there is one even more powerful hindrance to effective action. That is an almost complete lack of understanding of how to go about affecting the course of events. As a result, even when they are roused to action, advocates of autonomy often tend to direct their ire against that agency which is most visible, most accessible, most directly involved, even though the real culprit may be elsewhere.

The purpose of this study is to explore all facets of the states' involvement in the governance of postsecondary education, particularly in those states which use coordinating boards to govern their institutions. The events leading to increased state involvement will be described and the pros and cons of centralization explored. The role played by the various officers and units of state government in controlling postsecondary education will be examined in some detail. Finally, for those anxious to influence the evolution of the state-postsecondary education relationship, several possible courses of action will be suggested.

Armed with this information, partisans of collegiate autonomy should at least be able to fight the battle for control on the appropriate battleground.

I. BACKGROUND

"Control by federal and state governments continues to advance like a new ice age." (Carnegie Commission, Priorities for Action, 56)

"Higher education has never had less independence from public control, in all of American history, than it now has...The great change of the past decade was not the vociferous rise of student power but the quiet increase in public power--by governors, by legislators, by coordinating councils." (Chron. Higher Ed., 1973, 14)

"The great issue in the governance of higher education in the 1970's is not the struggle over who has power on the campus: students, faculty, administrators or trustees. The great issue is how the individual college or university can retain the power needed for effective governance, while government groups (state coordinating councils, superboards, legislatures, budget officers, governors' offices, and federal agencies - particularly HEW) expand their controls in the name of coordination, economy, and individual rights." (Corson, 1973, 107)

Surveys of those involved in higher education decision-making indicate that the above statements accurately represent their collective thinking. In a study done by the Western Interstate Compact for Higher Education, the Delphi technique was used to elicit responses from some 385 federal Congressmen, state governors and legislators, top staff members, coordinating board members, officials of national education associations, and college and university faculty, students, and administrators. Eighty-one percent of this composite agreed that it was virtually certain that "operations and administration in postsecondary education will become more consolidated and centrally controlled." (Harcleroad, 1) Of this number, a high percentage thought it would come about by 1978-9. Another study asked the presidents of all U.S. colleges and universities to predict shifts in the locus of general decision-making authority during the 1974-80 period; of the 49% who responded, 48% expected the authority of state coordinating agencies to increase, 47% felt that the state budgetary and finance agencies would grow, and 45% believed that the legislature's authority would increase. (Glenny et al, 1976, 126)

Legal Basis of State Control

Although many question the desirability of the state's increasing role in the governance of higher education, few dispute its legality. The United States Constitution, by virtue of its silence on the topic, leaves to the states the primary responsibility for the education of their citizens. The laws passed by the Congress and the decisions of the Supreme Court, of course, provide the framework within which all social institutions must operate. Many of these laws and decisions have a very direct and profound effect on postsecondary institutions. Within these limits, however, and those imposed by their own state constitutions, "legislatures have plenary, or complete, power over public education within their respective states." (Goldhammer, 1)

The way in which this power is exercised varies widely, both by states and, within states, by types of institution. Some states control postsecondary

institutions directly through statewide governing boards. Others assign operating functions to local or systemwide boards and retain only coordinating functions at the state level. And still others assume a halfway position: state boards have primary operating responsibility but share some powers with local or institutional advisory boards.

In most states, institutions of higher education have traditionally been granted a large measure of independence from state control. "Individual states have built their relationships on the most sophisticated legislature procedure in democratic government - the self-denying ordinance, by which states created and funded colleges but had only limited powers of review and control." (Cheit, 34) At the community college level, many states utilize the pattern by which the public school system has been governed since colonial times: the major responsibility for operating educational institutions is delegated to a unit of local government. In both of these cases, however, the legislature has not relinquished its final authority over the affairs of these institutions. Except in the case of those few institutions accorded special safeguards in the state constitution, the legislature can resume its "denied" or "delegated" powers at any time.

Philosophical Basis of State Control

There are also very valid philosophical reasons why the state plays a major role in the governance of higher education. Few would deny that "The definition and the satisfaction of social needs, the establishment of priorities, the assignment of resources for the realization of these objectives, and the structural decisions called for by them are obviously the responsibility of the political power." (LeBris, 72) In the past, however, it has been fashionable to think of education as "apolitical," as somehow set apart from other social institutions. This myth is fast disappearing. "One of the most pervasive yet elusive consequences of societal change is the growing realization that education does not stand in our society as an independent entity...the very existence of education depends on how well it contributes to the society of which it is an integral part, as well as on how society reacts to its provisions and contributions." (Morphet, 9) Higher education thus must be looked upon as but one among the many institutions and services desired by citizens in our society.

This means, then, that some level of government - local, state, or national - will decide both what proportion of available funds will be allocated to higher education and how that money will be spent. "When public financial support is given to institutions of higher education...the government has more than a benign interest in the system." (Sheffield, 103) The Carnegie Commission confirms the primacy of the state's role; it recommends that "state governments continue to exercise major responsibility, in cooperation with local governments and private institutions, for maintaining, improving, and expanding systems of postsecondary education adequate to meet the needs of the American people." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 17) The rationale is that "Since resources are limited, only through a state governmental agency can equity of treatment to individual colleges be guaranteed while assurance (is) given that prudent use of public monies will result in maximum services for state as well as local needs." (Bender, 56)

II. CAUSES OF INCREASED STATE CONTROL

The reasons for the growing power of the state in the affairs of higher education are not hard to find. Simply put, higher education has moved front and center on the stage of American life and, not surprisingly, has therefore found itself the object of everyone's attention. As Martin Trow commented, "Postsecondary education has been perceived as having become too important... and too costly to be left to professors and educators alone." (Israel, 35)

Rising Enrollments and Costs

A glance at selected figures shows the reasons for this new focus. "The 1960's decade is likely to have recorded higher education's greatest growth. Enrollment increased from 3.8 to 8.6 million students, annual expenditures rose from $7.7 to $27.1 billion, and the instructional staff grew from 292,000 to 592,000. In this ten-year span higher education expenditures tripled and enrollments more than doubled while the college-age population expanded by only 50%." (Halstead, 1) The magnitude of this change is illustrated both by the proportionate growth of college attendees and of state expenditures for higher education. "Whereas in 1900, for example, only about 4 percent of the U.S. college-age population attended college, after 1945 the proportion mounted steadily to one-half...What is more relevant from the perspective of the states, the proportion educated in public institutions increased from about 50 percent in 1950 to 67 percent in 1965, with 77 percent projected for 1980...Constituting about 7 percent of all state expenditures in 1950, higher education now consumes about 15 percent." (Berdahl, 28-9)

The tremendous increase in enrollments has heightened interest in postsecondary education in several ways. First, the substantial amount of state support required has forced it into a highly visible competition for funds with all other state institutions and services. Second, "the transition from elite to mass education to universal-access education...has meant that more members of the public both care and know about higher education." (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems, 20) And, third, this transition to education for a very heterogeneous population has led to a loss of consensus as to the goals of the system; this in turn has meant a more spirited public discussion of higher education than was previously the case.

Changing Conditions in the 1970's

As if all this were not enough to bring down the full force of state scrutiny on postsecondary institutions, events of the 1970's have conspired to accelerate this trend. About this time, according to one imaginative author, the "closing of the frontier began." The "moment has come with higher education...when the frantic pace of expansion must be slowed down and plans must be made for the wise use of resources." (Berdahl, 252) Data reveal that state commitment to higher education may have reached its apogee: "the proportion of state general revenue going to higher education has reached its peak in all regions of the nation except the South, where it still continues to increase. Thirty-six states, or over 75%, showed downward trends from the high reached during the late 1960's and early 1970's...The data show not an actual drop in the number of dollars appropriated, but rather the priority which state government now gives to higher education." (Glenny, 1976, 62)

The reasons for this are primarily but not exclusively economic. Many states found themselves in financial difficulty due to the effects of the recession of the early 1970's. At this same time, greater calls were being made on their resources by welfare needs, and the costs of social benefits in all areas was rising rapidly. Simultaneously, in terms of public satisfaction with postsecondary education, the bloom was off the rose: the public was becoming increasingly disenchanted with its colleges and universities, apparently feeling that they had failed to to live up to the high expectations of the previous decade.

Other societal trends, though not directly related to the expansion of higher education, have reinforced the move towards state control. Among these are the spread of collective bargaining to the collegiate level, a growing concern on the part of many lawmakers over unemployment on one hand and unmet manpower needs on the other, general disruption and the proliferation of noncomformist lifestyles on campus, and the general ascension throughout American society of public policy control over previously semi-autonomous institutions.

Federal Influences

Actions at the national level have provided a major impetus for strengthening the states' coordination and control apparatus. One author believes that "The drift toward state control has emerged as much or more from external forces represented by the federal government, the courts, and various national interest groups than it has from within each state itself." (Bender, 37) Although, as noted earlier, the Constitution does not assign the responsibility for education to the federal government, it also does not preclude it from acting in this area. It was not until the post-World War II years, however, that the Congress moved into education in a big way. The Office of Education noted on the occasion of its 100th birthday in 1967 that Congress had passed more major pieces of legislation for education in the previous three years than in the preceding 97 combined. (Zoglin, 13) It is not surprising that federal support came with strings attached; but it is important to realize that the strings were often attached to the state as well as to the federal government.

The National Defense Education Act of 1957, for example, "fostered a variety of state level offices or units charged with reviewing, approving, monitoring and subsequently auditing the programs, utilization and funding of the federally-initiated programs. Many of the offices...still exist as living testimony of this early precursor of state level control..." (Bender, 11) A few years later, strengthening the state's role in higher education became an explicit goal of the federal government: "Every federal program from 1963 on included some provision for creating or strengthening state level administrative units. In addition to a portion of each federal program appropriation being earmarked to support administrative personnel at the state level, Title V called for strengthening state agencies and resulted in an additional infusion of personnel...Created to establish more efficiency in state government, these units often assume broad powers in the name of economy and efficiency." (Bender, 13-4) More specifically, the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 created a state structure charged with administering and monitoring the program and called for the development of statewide plans for higher education; the Higher Education Act of 1965 provided for student financial aid and required states to establish machinery for processing applications; the Vocational Education Act of 1963 called for state level advisory committees to develop a state plan for the use of federal vocational dollars; and so on.

Clearly, the federal government - at times inadvertently and at times with malice aforethought - has played a major role in expanding the states' coordinating and control machinery.

III. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF INCREASED STATE COORDINATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Despite the nationwide move - some might even say "dash" - towards state coordination and control, there is little firm evidence as to the ultimate value of this course of action. The Carnegie Commission has opined that "No provable case can thus far be made that higher education is in any way better because of the centralization, except, where it has taken place, in the one area of careful advance academic planning for higher education as a whole." (Carnegie Foundation, 12) A 1976 report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching similarly concluded that "There is seemingly no known quantifiable consequence for actual operating results that can be associated with one or another approach to centralization of authority...we matched our evaluations of current state performances...with the methods of control operative both in 1965 and 1970...We found no clear results." (Carnegie Foundation, 87-8) And Berdahl states that "One searches the relevant literature in vain for objective canons of proof which would remove the subject from controversy, but one finds only unsubstantiated and contradictory arguments as to why coordination is 'good' or 'bad', or why this type is preferable to that..." (Berdahl, 40)

This lack of firm evidence, however, does not preclude the holding of firm opinions by partisans on both sides. Their major arguments are summarized in the following paragraphs. The reasons for opposing increased centralization will be cited first, since many of the favorable arguments are designed as much to refute them as to posit the merits of greater state control.

DISADVANTAGES

Distant Decision-making

A major concern is that those to whom a college or university is nearest and dearest - faculty, students, trustees, and administrators - feel out of touch and out of control when decisions are made far from the scene of action. It is not possible, so the argument goes, to elicit devotion and responsibility from these internal groups if they are shorn of decision-making power. One author calculates that "the wisdom of a decision is usually directly proportionate to the square of the distance between the decision-maker and the site of its application." (Corson, 1974, 22) Exacerbating this situation is the fact that "important decisions related to individual campuses are often made, not by the senior officials of a central staff, who, however remote they may be from the actual operations of the campus, are nonetheless usually qualified and experienced, but by minor clerks and functionaries operating according to little understood formulae, personal bias, or in careless haste." (Dearing, 55)

Loss of Creativity

Creativity will also suffer: the more remote each decision is from the

operating level, the more layers a proposal must go through to receive approval, the more time it takes to get action - the less motivation there will be for innovation on the campus. Cohen paints a picture of the future in which "trustees and administrators forget how to be educational leaders; the problems they consider are not what programs to offer...but how to manipulate the funding formulas to maximize the flow of dollars into the college...Faculty generally respond to centralized planning by militantly demanding more and more control over matters of less and less importance." (Cohen, 52) The expectation is that the feelings of alienation engendered by powerlessness will lead to lowered morale on the part of faculty and lowered productivity on the part of institutions.

Institutional Vitality

Closely related to this is the question of institutional vitality. "Though difficult to prove, it is nonetheless true that the state stands to lose far more through the diminished creativity and attenuated vitality of an overly controlled institution than through the relatively small sums that might be saved through the imposition of a tight preaudit of expenditures." (Berdahl, 11) Out of his 25 years of experience as a consultant on problems of organizations, Corson concluded that "The vitality of an organization...is a precious, fragile quality, created only by the infinite skill of truly able leaders and destroyed easily by dictatorial proceduralization and negativism; by the oppressive weight of the typical shelf of manuals teeming with rules and regulations and the manner in which bureaucracies build organizational distance between the individual and the leadership." (Corson, 1974, 21)

Bureaucracy

There are dangers lurking in the very act of creating the bureaucracy necessary to administer the state's coordinating machinery. A leading analyst of bureaucracies describes the dilemma as follows: "Bureaucracy and democracy are fundamentally different analytical types of social organization. A bureaucracy is an organization established for the explicit purpose of achieving specific objectives, and the organizing principle is administrative efficiency... A democracy is an organization established to ascertain the common objectives among men on the basis of the will of the majority of their representatives, and the organizing principle is the freedom of dissent necessary for majority opinions to form. The bureaucratic manager may have democratic convictions, but his administrative decisions are expected to be governed by the criterion of efficiency...Our democratic institutions originated at a time when bureaucracies were in a rudimentary stage and hence are not designed to cope with their control. To extend these institutions by developing democratic methods for governing bureaucracies is, perhaps, the crucial problem of our age." (Blau, 264-5)

As predicted, educators point to the tendency of the bureaucracy to confuse administrative efficiency with policy-making. As long ago as 1959 an investigating committee warned that "intervention of state agencies into ostensibly nonacademic areas can quickly penetrate to educational policies." (Berdahl, 12) There is nothing wrong with the state's concerning itself with the latter; however, "the 'penetration' should take place at the front door, as a conscious act of sovereignty. In short, the state should participate through a suitably sensitive mechanism for dealing with educational policies rather than as an incidental result of administrative controls being applied by persons only modestly (if at all) conversant with the problems of higher education." (Berdahl, 12)

Costs

Many are worried about the mounting costs of state control. Referring to the rapidly growing staffs at the state level, one author states (only half facetiously) that "The total number of these staff persons must surely rival the number of persons actually teaching. If not, they will soon." (Cheit, 32) Not only do the costs of the administering bureaucracy raise the price of education, but the time required for institutions to comply with the state's demand for information and collaboration imposes a heavy financial burden on them. "Information is not free, or even inexpensive, and...(it should) be treated as a valuable resource. The American Council on Education study of the costs of mandated social programs is an important first step towards identifying the impact of new programs." (Cheit, 61) Recent actions of the federal government directed towards cutting down on paperwork indicate the concern of officials at the national level; so far, however, little has been done to calculate the dollar costs - overt or covert - of the state control apparatus.

Standardization

A nagging fear is that state centralization will standardize colleges and universities in the interest of efficient management. "Each successive problem or incident that it (the state agency) deals with on any campus gives birth to an additional rule, regulation, or procedure. Like successive layers of sediment, they add to the oppressive weight that bears down on the unit within the system and constrains the individual." (Corson, 1974, 22) Although such constraints initially appear to affect only operational matters, they eventually spread throughout the institutional program.

Those institutions, like community colleges, which pride themselves on their sensitivity to the wishes of their constituents, fear that their ability to respond will be circumscribed. Others are concerned lest their special identity be lost as they are forced to become interchangeable cogs in a state system.

Accountability

There is a strong possibility that "a statewide planning and coordinating agency...may become interventionist...without having to take the onus of the mistakes that may be made..." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 112) As a result, institutional administrators are apt to find themselves under attack from all sides: "...the chairmen of academic departments and those responsible for specific operations within a campus are understandably less likely to think in terms of the total educational system. They are very likely to resent... coordinating principles and decisions coming from beyond the campus...Individual faculty members are even more likely...to be suspicious of all administration, and deeply hostile to centralized authority...With few exceptions, students have still less appreciation and acceptance of the coordinating function...(they) often call upon local authorities either quietly to ignore, or defiantly to violate, policies they consider to have been imposed by centralized coordinating authorities." (Dearing, 53-4) Institutional leaders are thus in the unenviable position of being blamed both for unpopular decisions they did not make and for their failure to make popular decisions they cannot make.

Big Government

Others object to increased state control out of a more generalized fear of "big government," which they feel creates more problems than it solves. They attribute many of the ills of American society today to the depersonalization and dehumanization that has already resulted from this phenomenon. Some waste and mismanagement in human affairs are thought to be not only tolerable but desirable; their cure is worse than the disease. The popularity of books like The Greening of America and a growing interest nationwide in the affective side of life stand as testimony to a deep concern about the direction of American society. In line with this, it is felt that the few dollars saved by coordinating, consolidating, and centralizing postsecondary education cannot possibly make up for the human costs in terms of alienation and frustration that are their inevitable accompaniment.

History

One final group of opponents of increased state coordination simply invites us to look to the past, to wit: "...those public universities which are usually regarded as the best (e.g., California, Michigan, Minnesota) have all been granted constitutional autonomy which allows them considerable freedom of internal administration..." (Berdahl, 11) And, more generally, "The States with historically the greatest freedom for higher education have also been the states that have developed the most outstanding public institutions." (Carnegie Foundation, 19)

ADVANTAGES

Other observers consider an increased state role in postsecondary education as not only inevitable but desirable. Ernest Boyer, newly appointed United States Commissioner of Education, has stated that he considers it "wasteful, if not downright self-deluding, to applaud on the one hand, the move toward mass education, while romanticizing, on the other hand, about outdated institutional design." (Boyer, 1974, 71)

Creativity and Innovation

Proponents of state control reject the widely-held belief that institutional independence leads to innovation. Indeed, they postulate that experimentation will be encouraged by a statewide approach: "...most institutions that stand alone are insecure...They refuse to risk either their reputations or their resources... The system can identify new goals, suggest new strategies, seek new funds, provide adequate protection to those who do wish to experiment... It is possible for the central administration of systems to create a climate which stimulates new approaches." (Boyer, 1974 79-80)

Walter Worth, deputy minister of the Department of Advanced Education in Alberta, Canada, spoke for many of his colleagues when he stated that "the opportunity for autonomy within higher education does not seem to produce new services or curricular change...instead it seems to perpetuate ritualism and privilege." (Sheffield, 111) Historically, pressures for change have come from the outside; many if not most "of the major structural innovations have been largely initiated externally, like the land-grant movement and the introduction of large-scale scientific research." (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems. 22)

Diversity

The idea that autonomy gives rise to diversity and coordination to standardization is also labeled as false. Independence, to the contrary, is felt to lead to "the most abject imitation of others or to competitive uniformity. Differentiation of functions and specialization of subject matter are often more likely to flow from central planning..." (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems, 22)

Economy

A primary argument for coordination, despite its admitted costs, is that it will (in the long run) bring great financial benefits to society. Savings in postsecondary education are expected to be made in the following ways: uniformity of expenditure levels save taxpayers' dollars; limited resources are distributed where they are most needed; unnecessary duplication is eliminated; wasteful competition in terms of programs and students ends; and the improved information systems required by centralization help individual campuses make better decisions.

Buffering Political Pressures

Supporters of state coordinating agencies feel strongly that they reduce the amount of political interference into the operations and policies of individual institutions. They cite the pressures brought to bear on state staff members by outside sources. Instead of the meddling they are accused of, they often act as "a buffer, a protection, a shield between the separate institutions and the demands that come from the external agencies...It is an unusual function, and a thankless one...few understand the number of protective actions that have been taken by the central system." (Boyer, 1974, 78)

A closely related argument is that "There is no such thing as 'no coordination' ...where no coordinating agencies were set up, the normal state organs - the governor's office, the budget office, legislative committees, the state auditor - have made decisions...which explicitly or implicitly performed this function. Rather than have coordination undertaken piecemeal by a variety of state offices, it is preferable from the standpoint both of autonomy and of the public interest that it be carried out by an agency specializing in higher education and planning on a comprehensive and long-range basis." (Berdahl, 41) The basic argument here is that state coordination always has and always will be with us. The apparent proliferation of control mechanisms is nothing more than an attempt to perform this function more effectively than has been done in the past.

Bureaucracy

Analysts of bureaucracies cite their positive contributions to the social good. "While bureaucracy is not suited for deciding between alternative ends, it is better suited than democracy for implementing these decisions. Hence, the two forms of organization are complementary. Democratic values require not only that social objectives be determined by majority rule but also that they be implemented by the most effective methods available, that is, by bureaucratically rather than democratically governed executive agencies...The co-existence of democratic and bureaucratic institutions in a society, however, poses a paradox. Bureaucracies seem to be necessary for, and simultaneously

incompatible with, modern democracy...If this is a paradox, it is also a challenge. We cannot turn the clock back and return to the New England township, in which unbureaucratic democracy was possible, and would not if we could, since we value the products that modern bureaucracies supply." (Blau, 265)

Proponents of state centralization concur, feeling that its advantages in the long run outweigh the disadvantages of the bureaucracy to which it gives birth.

Accountability

An analysis of the unusual conditions of resource allocation among public agencies is felt to support the need for increased state involvement with postsecondary institutions. Normally, when a buyer enters into a contract, the commodity or service to be provided is accurately described and its price clearly stated. The seller also knows both what is expected and what compensation will be received. In terms of state funding of higher education, however, "the goods and services produced...are not fully and accurately described, and their financial cost is neither fixed nor determined in a market." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 74) In the absence of an enforceable contract, "when a state purchases instruction, research, and public services from postsecondary education institutions, it often intervenes directly in the management of those institutions." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 75) Although in the past the state may have been willing to "buy" these services on good faith alone, the "increasing state interest and participation in the internal management of postsecondary education...indicates that the former implicit contract between educators and the public through state and federal governments is no longer credible..." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 76)

IV. CURRENT ROLE OF AGENCIES AND UNITS OF STATE GOVERNMENT

LEVELS OF STATE INVOLVEMENT

Although considerable semantic confusion exists, it is possible to distinguish several ways in which a state can make its presence felt in the world of postsecondary education. The most subtle way is to influence the course of events. "Influence can be and has been exerted by providing special funds for special activities...or by creating a climate of public opinion that may either encourage or discourage certain campus actions, or by direct persuasion." (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems, 18) The next level of intervention is through planning, which has been defined as "an attempt through foresight to generate action necessary to realize desired results...planning is a process of deciding upon a course of action in order to make something happen which, without planning, might not happen." (Halstead, 2) Moving along on this continuum, we come next to coordination. This term "implies the existence of separate units, each with some freedom to control its own operations, and thus the need for a technique or mechanism by which they can act together toward some purpose that cannot be achieved by isolated, individual actions." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 24) Coordination, further, "is effected by the

promulgation of broad guidelines and policies bearing on all coordinated bodies equally but within which the operating boards or agencies possess wide discretionary authority and responsibility." (Martorana, 76) The highest level of intervention is control: "Control exists when an order can be given to do or not to do some certain thing with penalties attached for non-compliance... control means to direct and to command." (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems, 18-19) Operationally, control is defined as "the power to decide on the details of internal policies and management of an individual institution or element." (Martorana, 76)

Some observers, however, question whether or not the distinctions between these levels of intervention can or should be preserved. Boyer argues that "There is a widely held notion in the United States that we can have a system of higher education which, while it coordinates and plans, will, at the same time, remain detached from the administrative and accountability functions. We are now beginning to discover that this dichotomy will not work. The reality is that those who coordinate higher education must also have the power to execute their plans, and they must be held accountable for what the system does or does not do...The point is this: We must create systems in which the coordinating functions and the accountability functions are interlocked. To separate these two obligations in our higher education structure is to spread confusion and create the worst of all worlds. Myth and reality must be brought together." (Boyer, 1977, 69-70)

MECHANISMS OF STATE INVOLVEMENT

The states coordinate and control their colleges and universities in three major ways: through fiscal management (estimating, budgeting, allocating operating and capital funds, accounting, and auditing), through program management (approving, reviewing, rationalizing, and articulating programs), and through planning (compilation of data, analysis, setting of goals, and evaluation.) (Sheffield, 103)

Budget

Of these, the budgetary mechanism is by far the most powerful. The degree of control exercised through it varies widely. At one extreme, controls are limited to those essential for good state budget practices, such as establishing common categories for reporting budget data, formulating common definitions of terms, applying common standards to measure space utilization, and postauditing appropriated funds. At the opposite end of the spectrum, all the procedural controls which normally accompany the expenditure of public funds are applied to postsecondary institutions; these include line-item budgets with tight control over transfers, preaudits of authorized expenditures, central controls over nonacademic personnel, capital outlay programs, administrative routines, such as approval of out-of-state travel, and central purchasing of supplies and equipment. (Berdahl, 10-11)

An even more important - if not widely understood - use of the budget is to set policy. Many state budgets in fact "contain a great deal of substantive legislation, in contrast to the federal level, that is, they set a great many policies that one would think would be set with independent laws...State governments in setting policy normally do so through the budget." (Glenny, 1975, 82)

Program Management

The second mechanism of state control - program management - has only recently been recognized as an independent function of state-level agencies and of the legislature. One author elaborates: "...it was hoped at first that program control could be achieved through the coordinating agency's exercise of its budget review power alone; more recently, program review has been regarded by some persons as an almost automatic process of approving or disapproving proposed programs on the basis of their compatibility with master plan guidelines. But close examination shows that neither process... obviates the need for a thorough process of program review in its own right." (Berdahl, 137) The purpose of program review is to "prevent unnecessary duplication of programs and functions in existing institutions; to encourage appropriate programs for many kinds of students in a diversity of colleges; and to provide order and control in the development of new campuses, schools, and departments." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 32) The state of the art, however, is primitive, with agencies still seeking ways of formulating procedures and developing criteria to bring the needed objectivity to the process.

Planning

Although in the early period of coordination, most enabling legislation did not even mention the third major type of state intervention - planning - it has now "become the central concern of formal coordinating agencies and increasingly of statewide governing boards. It is viewed as the principal process by which critical decisions are made about future ends and means in postsecondary education...All newly created agencies in the 1960's tended to place planning in the highest priority." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 27) Current planning efforts, although varying widely both in style and in content, "all sooner or later deal with the problems of total expenditures, budget allocations between institutions, duplication of activities, unit costs.. quality versus quantity of performance, institutional autonomy versus public accountability, and others." (Perkins, 1974, 66) The Carnegie Commission recommends that state planning efforts should, at a minimum, be directed to questions of present and future access to postsecondary education, the appropriate functions for the various types of institutions, the orderly growth of postsecondary education, and articulation among its various elements. (Carnegie Commission, 1974, 256)

As agencies have become more sophisticated, the means by which planning is conducted have changed. "Less and less, the central staffs of the state agencies, with the help of a few consultants, generate the ideas, attitudes, goals, and the means for achieving them which comprise the plan. More and more, the central staffs provide...the factual elements used by a broad range of technical task forces and advisory committees charged with initiating recommendations to solve the diverse higher education problems...Additionally, public hearings are often held...As a result, both new ideas and broad consensus for the plan are developed, allowing the legislature and governor to avoid much...acrimonious contention." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 29)

ROLE OF THE LEGISLATURE

In discussing the state's role in higher education, the agency that usually comes to mind first is the statewide coordinating or governing board.

This board, however, is merely the tip of the iceberg; it is established by and is dependent upon the legislative and executive branches of state government. Its situation as middleman between these units and postsecondary institutions cannot be properly understood without a knowledge of their functioning. For this reason, I shall first describe the role of the legislature and the governor's office in coordinating and controlling postsecondary education.

Growing Power of Legislatures

The legislature, as indicated earlier, has the legal right to establish, to govern, and to operate its postsecondary institutions in any way it deems fit. It is limited only by higher authorities such as the state and federal constitutions and court decisions. Some state universities, however, do enjoy constitutional status and thus are at least partially exempt from the vagaries of legislative control. For the great majority of postsecondary institutions, however, state legislators are "strategic decision-makers in politics affecting higher education. The resources mobilized for colleges and universities, the goals to which such resources are allocated, and how they are distributed depend to a great extent on the views and decisions of the nation's legislative bodies." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 21)

And this will apparently be even truer in the future. Daniel Coit Gilman's oft-quoted statement that governors and legislators should be "quick to help and slow to interfere" (Carnegie Commission, Six Priority Problems, 75) would be thought hopelessly naive today. In the study cited earlier of presidents' perceptions of changes in the locus of decision-making, 37% felt the legislature had taken a more active role during the 1968-74 period and 45% expected this shift to continue throughout the seventies. (Glenny et al, 1976, 126)

Budgetary Controls

Once postsecondary institutions have been established, the legislature's major continuing source of control is its power to appropriate funds for operating and capital expenses. This power is exercised over all institutions, whether or not they enjoy special constitutional status. Indeed, for funding purposes, all institutions of higher education are treated as one among many state agencies and services in competition for public funds.

Legislatures often use the budget as a major policy-making vehicle. Sometimes legislative intent is expressed through riders attached to budgetary bills. At other times, policy changes are simply imbedded in the budget itself. When the California legislature decided that its open-door community colleges were expanding too fast, it did not pass a law changing its policy in this regard. Instead, it simply limited the funds going to them for the following year. As one college president stated, "It would be impolitic for the legislature itself to redefine the mission or priorities of the community colleges or to suggest that we should curb our efforts to serve the reentry of women, older adults, ethnic and racial minorities, the unemployed, the disadvantaged, or the handicapped." (Drexel, 1) Via its appropriations bill, however, the legislature had in fact made policy in this regard. Sometimes major decisions of this type are made in an even less obvious fashion, at the level of the committees where budgets are decided upon. Speaking of the coordination of higher education in Colorado, one state senator is reported to have said, "The Colorado Joint Budget Committee dictates everything." (Paradise, 23)

Statutes

Legislatures, of course, can and do pass laws dealing with a wide variety of specific situations in the field of education - mainly in areas in which they see problems which are not being solved to their satisfaction within institutions or systems. The California legislature, in fact, is often accused of picturing itself as "one large school board for the state."

One very insidious practice is to threaten colleges and universities by introducing a bill that the author knows has little chance of passage. It is difficult, however, for institutional representatives to be sure that no action will take place. All are familiar with last-minute amendments that slip through unnoticed and with the "nuisance bill" that is reintroduced so many times that it finally gains respectability. Thus institutions must be sensitive to all bills introduced, whatever their expected support in the legislature.

Compliance

Once legislation - either within or without the budget bill - has been approved, the next step is for the legislature to determine if the recipients of their largesse are complying with the intent of the law. "To be fair and equitable in new allocations, the state must also ascertain how well the previous expenditures have been managed and spent." (Glenny and Dalglish, 60) To do this, legislatures often authorize special study committees to look into specific aspects of college operations. Recently they have begun to set up offices to carry out performance audits. It is clear that "the legislature intends to use professional staffs to determine whether or not universities comply with line-items in the appropriations bills, with riders, and with the intent of legislative committees." (Glenny and Dalglish, 114) Although this type of activity has been going on in governors' offices for some time, it is something of a new departure for legislatures. In some states, it is "as much a reaction to the growing power of the governor as to other causes." (Glenny and Dalglish, 115)

One advantage legislators do have over the governor is that they are often reelected for many terms and serve on the same committees throughout their tenure in office. As a result, postsecondary institutions have to "return at the end of each budget cycle to face the same committee chairman and staff members who established the legislative intent the university was meant to interpret and fulfill." (Glenny and Dalglish, 116) This can be a powerful persuader for those institutions anxious to continue to receive favorable treatment from the legislature.

Proliferation of Staff

As one might expect from the activities described above, legislative staffs are growing by leaps and bounds. "In Florida during the past seven years the number of legislative aides has tripled." (Wattenbarger. 3) These new staff members are employed as aides to individual legislators, as staff for permanent and special committees, and as personnel for special offices under the direct control of the legislature. The most important of the latter is the office of the Legislative Analyst/Auditor/Fiscal Bureau (titles vary), which does in-depth studies and provides analyses and recommendations to committees or to the legislature as a whole. (Glenny and Dalglish, 63)

This proliferation of staff members brings with it not only the spectre of greater attention and therefore greater control from the legislature, but it also may engender the whole panoply of bureaucratic restraints and irritations described earlier.

Divisions within the Legislature

Another complicating factor is that there are many different legislative groups dealing with higher education. In all states except Nebraska the legislature is composed of two houses. Each of them is likely to have its own appropriations and education committees. Each committee - some of which dissolve into subcommittees as well - may be pursuing different goals, which are often in conflict with those of other committees. And, finally, at the end of the session, it may be necessary for a joint committee to iron out differences between the houses. Despite all the sound and fury that has gone before, it may be here that the real decisions are made.

Not only is there a multiplicity of committees, each doing its own thing, but there is also a multiplicity of legislators, each doing his or her own thing. "Whereas the executive can pursue a single course of action aggressively, the legislators are not only divided into two parties, two houses, and numerous standing committees and special study groups, but they must accommodate to a substantial contingent of new members after each election." (Glenny and Dalglish, 111) This division may be either good or bad for postsecondary institutions seeking legislative support: on the one hand, they bear the burden of attempting to satisfy the whims of each legislator, no matter how parochial his or her interests; on the other hand, the inability of legislators to agree among themselves makes it easier for institutions of higher education to meet the demands of the various committees under whose jurisdiction they find themselves. (Glenny and Dalglish, 111) In other words, if you can't kill a hostile bill in the Education Committee, there's always a chance to do it in Appropriations; if one House won't go along with you, perhaps the other will; if all else fails, the joint conference committee may just save you; and so on.

Legislative-Gubernatorial Conflict

"An important phenomenon for...leaders to understand is the nature of the power struggle in many states between the governor and the legislature. Repressive legislation or executive orders have often resulted from these circumstances." (Bender, 23-4) Good sense dictates that "In conflicts among politicians, it is best not to be in the middle, for neither side can be entirely pleased and one side may be entirely alienated." (Glenny and Dalglish, 116)

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Governors' powers over higher education fall into two categories: those inherent in the office of the governor itself and those belonging to the various offices that comprise the executive branch.

The Governor

A recent report stated that "The potential influence of a governor over public higher education in his state is perhaps greater than any other single force affecting the state's public colleges and universities." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 55) Although at one time governors were considerably less than equal to legislatures in terms of policy control, the trend is now in the opposite direction. "Today," as one legislator reported, "we wonder why we meet at all." (Glenny and Dalglish, 55)

The governor's power comes in many forms. Among them are the right to appoint, with or without review or consent by any other body, the members of state coordinating and governing boards; ex officio membership on the governing board of public institutions of higher education; the authority to review and approve or disapprove master plans for growth in higher education; the power to veto bills, either in whole or in part, and to reduce amounts in appropriations bills; and control over the process of implementing and administering programs approved by the legislature. (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 19) Although all governors do not have all of these powers, each has some admixture thereof.

As if this were not enough, governors' extralegal powers are in some ways even stronger than their legal ones. Their ability to influence the climate of opinion throughout the state is immense. While the legislature's message is often unclear because it speaks with so many voices, the chief executive can pursue his or her goals in a completely unified manner. In addition, as state leader of a political party, the governor's influence permeates all levels of government. Their influence on legislation is tremendous, not only because of the above-mentioned arsenal but also because the threat of a veto can be used to shape statutes to their liking. The power of the potential veto can be seen in the fact that only one veto has been overridden in California in the past 24 years. And, if for some reason governors do not choose to focus attention on a dispute with higher education, they can often force the institutions involved to negotiate a settlement out of the public eye. (Glenny and Dalglish, 108-10)

Budget Office

Governors also have at their command a fast-growing array of agencies to help work their will on the state's postsecondary institutions. Primus inter pares is the state budget office. Forty-five percent of the presidents surveyed in the study quoted earlier indicated that their governing board had lost power to the state budget office in the years between 1968 and 1974, and 47% expected this trend to continue. (Glenny et al, 126) In another study aimed at determining the percentage of total influence exercised by each agency involved in the governance process, a rating of 27% was assigned to the state's budget office. Its influence was ranked second only to that of the institutional governing board. (Glenny and Dalglish, 98)

The heart of the budget office's power lies in the fact that it initiates the budget and therefore establishes the parameters within which all institutions and agencies must maneuver. "The agency which formulates rules and regulations has an advantage over the university and other state budget review agencies, since the information furnished it comes as a direct response to that particular agency's objectives. Hence, the agency which controls budget preparation and establishes formulas and guidelines has exercised great influence even before the substantive matters submitted have been examined." (Glenny and Dalglish, 87)

Although budget offices are more and more likely to be staffed with professionals, one former high state official warns that "They do not...wear two hats - university interest and public interest, and they do not have to assume the awesome task of reconciling differences when they arise...These good men are hired and rewarded for carrying out from the state's point of view one important responsibility...concern with efficiency." (Sherriffs, 9).

Their numbers alone give some cause for concern: in California, for example, 20 auditors and several budget analysts are now reviewing the university budget, a task formerly accomplished by one man. (Glenny and Dalglish, 107)

Performance Audits

A second function - though one that has not necessarily led to the formation of a separate agency - rapidly gaining status within the executive as well as the legislative branch is performance or evaluation auditing. A recent study of 17 states found that 14 of them had staffs involved in this activity. "Performance audits have proliferated in the past five years and existing staffs are becoming larger." (Cheit, 32) These audits concentrate on assessing specific areas or topics in the field of higher education rather than on evaluating particular institutions.

Planning Office

"The newest of the state agencies which could affect higher education but has not yet made its presence felt, is the state planning office. Closely tied in with the governor's office, these agencies now exist in 26 states and are formed to provide research and analyses, and to encourage improved planning and coordination of the total program of state government." (Glenny, 1971, 12) As higher education becomes increasingly thought of as merely one of the many services provided by state government, it can be expected to fall more and more under the supervision of the overall planning agency.

Other Offices and Agencies

These three major arms of the executive - budget, performance auditing, and planning offices - are supplemented by a covey of special purpose agencies. The most common of these affecting postsecondary education are the department of public works and buildings, the civil service commission or personnel board, the higher education facilities commission, and the scholarship and loan commission.

The Future

The Carnegie Commission in 1971 noted that it "is concerned with the growing domination of governors over higher education in several of the states...

generally, we believe that governors should not be the dominant forces in higher education." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 2) Despite their concern, however, it is probable that higher education will continue to be affected by the general societal trend towards a "strong governor" form of state government.

COORDINATING AGENCIES

History

The most obvious manifestation of the states' determination to play a larger role in the governance of higher education is the proliferation of agencies specifically charged with statewide coordination and/or control.

Historically, collegiate institutions enjoyed almost complete autonomy from state regulation from colonial days until the late 19th century. Many colleges, however, found their independence considerably restrained by the sponsoring religious denomination, by the surrounding community, by a perennial lack of funds, and by other similarly inhibiting forces. The states, however, did not begin to move into this sphere until the late 1800's, when they began to establish statewide governing boards. By 1932, 15 of these existed. During the 1940's and '50's the trend was to create voluntary associations, while the current movement to establish statewide coordinating boards began to accelerate in the 1950's. (Berdahl, 26) Three types, then, of coordinating structures - voluntary associations, coordinating boards, and governing boards -have been widely used during the past 15 years. All have been in a state of constant flux or refinement during this period.

Voluntary associations, composed primarily of institutional officers, were often formed but seldom long-lived. "The overall effectiveness of voluntary agencies can be seen in their record of instability and their poor record of accomplishment." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 22) Only one state depended on a voluntary association for coordination by 1972.

The most persistent, if not the most popular, type of coordinating mechanism is the single board which governs all the public institutions of higher education in a state. A 1972 count indicated that there were 21 of these in existence. A consolidated board of this type is charged with full responsibility for governing all institutions under its jurisdiction.

Some 26 states have shown a preference for statewide coordinating boards. Such boards are superimposed on systemwide or institutional governing boards which continue to operate individual colleges or systems of postsecondary institutions. The creation of coordinating boards has certain political advantages over the formation of consolidated governing boards, since it does not require the abolition of existing boards. This solves the almost insurmountable problem of eliminating an established agency. Also, a coordinating board is "more readily accepted by institutions on the assumption that (it will permit) more initiative and more autonomy than a governing system." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 22)

Types of Coordinating Boards

Coordinating boards come in a variety of shapes and forms. The following

chart describes those in existence now and indicates their evolution over the past 40 years.

"Number of Coordinating Agencies, by Type Classification: 1939-1972

Type Classification	1932	1949	1959	1964	1969	1972
No State Agency	33	28	17	11	2	2
VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION (high degree of institutional freedom)	0	3	7	4	2	1
COORDINATING BOARD (created by statute but does not supersede institutional governing boards)						
a. Majority of institutional representatives having essentially advisory powers	1	1	2	3	2	0
b. All or majority of public members having essentially advisory powers	0	0	3	8	11	8
c. All or majority of public members having regulatory powers in certain areas but not governing responsibility	1	2	5	7	14	18
CONSOLIDATED GOVERNING BOARD (charged with full responsibiltiy for governing all institutions under its jurisdiction)	15	16	16	17 (Halstead, 7)	19	21"

The trend is clearly in the direction of strengthening coordinating boards. More and more of their members represent the public rather than institutions, and there is a strong tendency to "discontinue their advisory role in favor of regulatory powers." (Halstead, 9) Across the nation they "are being authorized new or extended powers by almost every session of the legislature..." (Glenny and Dalglish, 122)

Functions of Coordinating Boards

Although no consensus exists, the most frequently-mentioned purposes for which coordinating agencies are established are to clarify goals, to exert leadership in attaining these goals, to achieve efficiency by avoiding duplication in programs and facilities and competition for students, to foster excellence in terms of both diversity and quality, and to serve as a communications link both among elements of the postsecondary system and between it and the state government and the public.

Powers of Coordinating Boards

In order to perform the above functions, boards must have certain powers. The following are considered to be critical:

1. Collection of data on which to base policy decisions (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 26)

2. Budget review: The Carnegie Commission recommends that: "If there is no existing state agency which does or can undertake budget review for higher education, budget review, as opposed to budget control, could be assigned to the coordinating agency." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 28) But if an existing state agency such as the budget office or finance office undertakes budget review for higher education, the coordinating agency should not be given the responsibility for an independent budget review, but should instead be involved in the budget review process of the other state agency." (Carnegie Commission, 1974, 267) Thus the degree of thoroughness of the budget review performed by the coordinating board will depend upon that assigned to other state agencies.

3. Program review: Although the pattern of program review varies widely from state to state, it generally "concerns itself with such decisions as the following: whether to establish new institutions, branches, campuses, or professional schools, and, if so, where; what role and scope missions, if any, to assign to new or existing institutions; which new degree programs or courses to establish; which to reallocate or eliminate; which research and public service activities to institute; and what degree of control to exercise over programs funded from nonstate sources." (Berdahl, 12)

4. Master Planning: Among the topics addressed by master plans are the scope and extent of the instructional programs offered by postsecondary institutions, expected enrollments, access in terms of admissions policy, fees, and standards of achievement, and public policy in relation to private education. (Millett, 47)

5. Advocacy: "The need for advocacy at the state level stems from the (fact) that...governmental policy will be fundamental in influencing the allocation of public resources and thus institutions must have an advocate in the state to plead their case and to press for their support." (Bender, 36) While the processes of budget review, master planning, and program review can be considered ways in which the state communicates its desires to the institutions, the coordinating agency in its advocacy role provides a channel for expressing institutional desires to state officials and policy-makers.

Exercise of Board Powers

Even though the legal role of a coordinating agency may be clearly set forth in statute, this does not tell the whole story. It is very difficult, for example, to determine in many cases if a board truly has advisory powers or regulatory powers. Three factors complicate this issue:

"1. Board functions extend over a wide range of possible activities... and board powers may be advisory in some areas and regulatory in others.

2. There may be significant discrepancies between the de jure existence of powers and their de facto exercise.

3. The de facto exercise of powers may vary over time as the board confronts changing conditions in state government, higher education, or both." (Berdahl, 24)

Looked at from the angle of functions, there is still more ambiguity. "Each function may be exercised, if it is exercised at all, with a degree of authority ranging from information and advice to institutions and the state to

outright power to decide; it may be exercised very broadly or in very specific detail." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 106)

And, in terms of both powers and functions, Berdahl warns that "one must not judge a board's powers alone on the external evidence. For instance, a board with strong legal powers that turns down very few proposed new programs may seem at first glance to be failing to use those powers fully enough; but in fact the situation may be attributable to an effective communications network which operates to spare institutions the embarrassment of a formal rejection." (Berdahl, 159) Indeed, one of the most subtle yet effective weapons in the arsenal of coordinating agencies is their ability to shape institutions' expectations of what is or is not acceptable behavior. This is comparable to the precedent-setting effect of Supreme Court decisions in the judicial world. And in the field of psychology it is well known that "Observed consequences... play an influential role in regulating behavior...Most human behavior, of course, is not controlled by immediate external reinforcement. Rather, people regulate their own actions to some extent by self-generated anticipatory and self-evaluative consequences." (Bandura, 293) So too with postsecondary institutions in their dealings with coordinating boards.

Staff

There is widespread agreement that the effectiveness of a coordinating board is heavily dependent upon the quality of its professional staff. One author goes so far as to say that the "Success or failure of state level boards or agencies normally is dependent more upon the role of the personalities than on the structure or range of powers of the organization. The approach and philosophy of the state director and his staff is central to the working relationships between the state and the local college." (Bender, 35)

The staff of a coordinating board has some very special problems. It was noted earlier that few people at the campus level have any understanding of - let alone commitment to - statewide coordination. And institutional administrators, although usually aware of this situation, often succumb to the temptation to place the blame - deserved or not - for unpopular decisions on the state board. However, since staff members are more visible and easier to contact than board members, the former may get the lion's share of the criticism. And institutions may often be correct in attributing an adverse decision to staff members: they exercise a strong influence on the thinking of the coordinating board in general and of its lay members in particular. This is true of all state-level boards and commissions whose members get together infrequently and have but one main source of information: their staff. Therefore it is not surprising that institutions direct their hostility against the agency's staff when a decision goes against them at the board level.

Difficulties of Coordinating Board Role

An amazing amount of the literature on coordinating agencies is devoted to describing the difficulties inherent in their role. Basically, the problem is that they have no dependable constituency. The institutions see them as another unwanted restraint on their independence, while other governmental agencies are reluctant to relinquish any of their powers to them. California's now-defunct Coordinating Council for Higher Education was a perfect example. "The weak budget role accorded to this board at its inception in 1960 was not

accidental. Neither the state government nor the insititutions wanted another layer added to the already 4-layered review process." (Berdahl, 114)

Even within the areas of responsibility conceded to them, coordinating boards may have to work to carve out a place for themselves. "The legal role of a coordinating board is important, but ultimately it gains its position by being useful to the arms of government and to the institutions. Agencies without strong legal powers gain influence by service." (Glenny and Dalglish, 118) Sometimes, however, they do not succeed in establishing credibility and find themselves bypassed: "Loss of credibility, whether caused by political suspicions or mediocre performance and responsiveness, has typically resulted in the growth of separate staffs to accommodate legislative committees and individual legislators." (Bender, 22)

On the executive side, the board's relations with the state finance or budget office are ambiguous, to say the least. One author wisely notes that "Few state agencies, including state educational organizations, are fully aware of the degree to which they are or can be controlled by other state agencies, particularly state agencies established primarily for the general management of the executive branch of government." (Schweickhard, 1) The problem seems to be one of territory: "Legally speaking, the (coordinating) agencies are part of the executive branch of government, yet they have a special status...They are much like regulatory commissions; their specialty is higher education. In consequence, the state budget staff has misgivings about the coordinating agency's encroachment on the budgetary role." (Glenny and Dalglish, 121) There is a story - illuminating even if apocryphal - that a state director of finance once referred with horror to the possibility that the new coordinating board would become "a successor to the Department of Finance in making certain higher education judgments." (Berdahl, 114)

While coordinating boards are busy fending off frontal attacks from the legislature and various state agencies, they are also subject to sniping from the institutions under their jurisdiction. In addition to their generalized hostility to the idea of state control, they may resent a particular action of the coordinating board. In that case, they try an end run. "The institution that wants to do something opposed by the agency may succeed in generating enough constituency support and governmental interest to obtain the mandate which the agency opposes." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 113) California's former Coordinating Council was particularly subject to this: "the three segments tended to push their budgetary claims independently of - not through - the Coordinating Council." (Smelser, 33) And in the highly controversial area of reallocating or eliminating programs, boards run into trouble to such an extent that "The power to reallocate and eliminate programs is seldom exercised because past experience has shown that such moves have unfortunate political repercussions, stirring up controversy and even leading to the agency's decision being overturned." (Berdahl, 170) The only solution to the problem of institutional-agency relations, according to one writer, is to maintain "constructive tension, with cooperation alternating with adversarial relationships as the situation demands." (Spurlock, 193)

Conflicting Expectations

Perhaps the major problem facing coordinating boards is that they are damned if they do and damned if they don't. They are caught in the crossfire of conflicting expectations. "From the institutional standpoint, the agency should represent the desires and aspirations of the institutions, as formulated

by the institution. The agency should persuade the political arm of state government to fulfill these desires. From the government's standpoint, the agency should assist the state government in the enactment and supervision of desirable state policies that represent a statewide interest." (Education Commission of the States, 77) More concretely, "Legislators in many states looked to the statewide board to limit spending with equity among the institutions, while the presidents of institutions thought the board successful only if it sought the total funds which they requested." (Glenny & Weathersbee, 30)

Actually, the coordinating boards were to some extent able to meet all these demands during the period of growth: they were able "to provide additional funds to the institutions, which made their restrictive actions more acceptable... (while) the boards' judicious use of resources won approval by the legislatures." (Mautz, 264-5) Now, however, they are beginning to operate in an era of shrinking resources. As a result, "from the universities' standpoint, boards may appear ineffective advocates, and from the legislative standpoint, ineffective managers." (Mautz, 265)

There is an almost irresistible temptation to lean to one side or the other, to relate more closely to the institutions or to other state agencies. Each of these has its special perils. One observer notes that "if the potential dangers of too heavy an agency involvement with the institutions are inordinate delays and the reputation of being a holding company for the institutions, then the corollary dangers of excessive agency involvement with state offices are pressures for premature decisions, the reputation of being a whipcracker for the state, and the possibility of getting caught in the crossfire when state officials oppose one another." (Berdahl, 192) Another equally unsatisfactory way out of this dilemma is sometimes tried: "In-between regulatory mechanisms cannot long exercise authority...strictly on their own. Thus they are driven either to the exercise of authority on minor matters or to acting as the agent of some more forceful authority that has its own power base. In the former case, weak authority over minor matters can be very intrusive; and, in the latter case, the mechanism becomes a means of politicizing higher education." (Carnegie Foundation, 13)

One state director did feel that his agency had achieved the ideal: "We are neither a direct agency for the governor or legislature, nor a front for colleges and universities. We take an independent position...We have no close friends, but we always have a defensible position." (Berdahl, 186) Unfortunately, few agencies are generally considered to have reached such a perfect equilibrium.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Many - both within and without the field of postsecondary education - are concerned about the seemingly inexorable trend away from local and institutional autonomy. Some would like to halt it, others to reverse it, still others to turn it in a more productive direction. Whatever their motivation, they all share one problem: in order to be effective, they must understand the situation. The previous section described the various elements that enter into the autonomy-centralization power equation. Even assuming knowledge of the mechanisms of state coordination and control, it is often difficult to develop an appropriate plan of action. The purpose of this section will be to suggest several possible alternatives that might be followed by those interested in affecting the course of events.

Conclusions

Several conclusions emerge from this examination of the state's role in postsecondary education. They are as follows:

1. The trend towards increased state coordination and control of postsecondary education shows no signs of abating.

2. If unchecked, it will further circumscribe the autonomy of colleges and universities.

3. The desire and ability of the legislative and executive branches of state government to become more directly involved in postsecondary education is growing.

4. It is becoming increasingly difficult for interested educators and citizens to learn "where the power lies."

Proposals for Action

1. Seek to de-mystify the state coordination/control process.

This is a necessary prelude to any other action that might be considered. Currently, rational action is effectively precluded because no one knows where the power lies. Thus any changes, no matter how sweeping, might prove to be purely cosmetic because they ignore the real locus of power. As one frustrated educator complained: "The most serious aspect of this situation is that we are not confronted by an enemy whom we can identify as the bad guy and challenge to fight." (Drexel, 1) As noted earlier, coordinating boards are particularly vulnerable in this respect. What colleges see as aggrandizement on the board's part may well be a legitimate response to pressure from the legislature or governor. By the same token, a coordinating board may attempt to disguise its own ineptness by passing the buck to the state finance office or a legislative committee.

Thus any attempt to bring about change must start with a study designed to accurately describe the current role of each agency and unit of state government in the control and coordination of postsecondary education. The results of this study should be disseminated throughout the postsecondary community.

2. Seek agreement on the essential elements of institutional and local autonomy.

Before embarking on a voyage, it is best to decide on a destination. Similarly, colleges and universities must identify their goals in the area of governance if they are to have any chance of attaining them. In order to take concerted action, they must first of all reach consensus on the essential ingredients of autonomy.

The issues involved might best be explored by a committee composed of representatives of a state's postsecondary institutions. Their task would be to differentiate between those powers which the state needs to protect its interests in postsecondary education and those which colleges and universities must have to function effectively. This need not be a monumental undertaking:

a survey of the literature indicates that considerable research has already been done on this topic. The role of the committee would be to analyze the available studies and to adapt them to fit the particular conditions in their state.

The resulting document should serve as a guide for evaluating the existing structure and for proposing modifications thereto. It should be widely circulated so that all those involved in postsecondary education will better understand the governance structure in their state and its effects on institutional and local autonomy.

3. Seek to reverse the trend towards increased state control.

This alternative would require a concerted effort on the part of the state's entire postsecondary establishment. Although unusual, it would not be unprecedented. Just last year the state coordinating mechanism for community colleges in Nebraska was dismantled and the colleges returned to the control of local boards. A recent Gallup poll indicated that the attachment to local control runs deep: more than two-thirds of those queried said they wanted local boards of trustees (rather than state or national agencies) to have more control, while only 10% were of the opposite persuasion. (Workshops, 23) A committee of the California legislature also acknowledged the desirability of moving in this direction. After an intensive study of the state's postsecondary system, it found that one of the ten most significant policy issues facing the state was: "How can governance be decentralized and the trend towards bureaucratization of postsecondary education be curbed?" (California Legislature, 82)

4. Seek to stabilize the situation.

This approach falls somewhere between Alternative 1, which seeks only to describe the existing situation, and Alternative 5, which seeks actively to modify it. A decision to try for stabilization would be appropriate when the political climate is too unfavorable to permit desired changes to be made but when codification of the status quo might be acceptable.

The goal here is to avoid further erosion of institutional autonomy; it can be thought of as a sort of holding action. The descriptive material prescribed in Alternative 1 would be used as a basis for incorporating existing practices into law. The effort to attain statutory status would at the very least provide an excuse for examining the problems connected with institutional control and might well lead to some rationalization of the existing system. The purpose of such an examination, however, would simply be to sort out and freeze into law the powers and responsibilities already assigned to each of the entities involved in the governance of postsecondary education.

Action of this type has taken place in several states. The California community colleges, for example, have derived a considerable measure of protection from a clause in the statute establishing their statewide Board of Governors stating that:

> "The work of the board shall at all times be directed to maintaining and continuing to the maximum degree permissible, local autonomy and control in the administration of the community colleges." (Education Code, 1563)

The legislature subsequently delineated in the state Education Code the functions of the Board of Governors and of the local district governing boards. Although this was to be construed as "an expression of the policy of the Legislature" rather than as "an enactment of specific legal provisions," (Education Code, 1567) it has been very influential in determining the relationship between the state Board and the colleges.

A somewhat different approach to stabilizing the situation was taken recently in the state of Washington. Interested parties there drew up a document entitled Policy Recommendations for Washington Postsecondary Education, 1976-82, which one report describes as "a 'treaty' (arrived at) openly and on the basis of long-run considerations." (Carnegie Foundation, 18) This "treaty" clearly demarcates the responsibilities for postsecondary education of the institutions and of the coordinating board.

5. Seek to simplify the current state structure.

There is no question but that money is wasted, energy dissipated, and frustration aroused by the duplication of functions at the state level. The watchword seems to be "Not one review if two will do." And this from agencies whose rallying cry is "Efficiency and Economy!" One author suggests that "academics must work to make the accountability movement accountable." (Cheit, 61)

The complexity of the current situation in the state of Washington points up the need for simplification: "What was at one time a small, local, autonomous community college...is now part of a system which must relate to the State Community College Board, the State Council for Postsecondary Education, the State Commission for Vocational Education, the State Higher Education Personnel Board, the Higher Education Committees of the State House and Senate, the Governor of the State, and his budget office, and numerous other local, state, and federal agencies." (Goltz, 12)

One major reason for the overlapping of functions is that "Each of the many state agencies has its own legislative enabling act giving it powers and duties. Each exercises its authority with little reference to the others. Some work at divergent or conflicting purposes...No coherent overall policy in relation to higher education guides the various state agencies." (Glenny, 1971, 14)

This is a problem of nationwide importance. President Carter has drawn attention to it. A senate bill was recently amended to "require its committees to include with each bill or joint resolution a report evaluating the regulatory impact of the proposed legislation...Included in the report must be an estimate... of the amount of paperwork and the economic impact on the government and insititution..."(Chron. Higher Ed.), 1977, 9)

This is not to say that all duplication of functions at the state level can or should be eliminated: some is both purposeful and functional, designed to insure scrutiny from a variety of angles. Others, however, served a purpose at some time but became superfluous as new agencies were created and new laws passed. Still other repetition occurs when one agency or unit of government does not approve of the way the others do their jobs; the critical group repeats the work of the others in order to "be sure that it's properly done."

Simplifying the state control mechanism is a ticklish business. Some agencies might well have their sphere of authority reduced. Any such reallocation of powers and duties could only be made with strong political backing. The best approach would be to establish a study commission with representation from all important educational and political groups in order to assure that it will have the necessary legislative and gubernatorial support to put its recommendations into effect.

6. Seek to promote the autonomy of institutions within multi-unit systems.

Many colleges (two- as well as four-year) and universities are part of local or state multi-unit systems; their central offices also constrain institutional autonomy. Their governing boards often have the authority to determine what degree of independence each campus will enjoy.

Some of these systems started out as single institutions governed by a board of trustees or regents. The transfer of power to a systemwide office "is usually an unintended by-product of success: as the original college becomes overcrowded, it spawns a second or even a third or a fourth sibling campus. To administer this growing family, a central organization has to be set up. Certain areas of decision-making then move from the campus to the central office." (Zoglin, 159) In other cases, consolidation of previously autonomous units resulted in a more centralized system. During the period of tremendous expansion in higher education, this story was repeated over and over again, with the number of campuses in a single system going over 60 in the state of New york. Even some locally-run community colleges became mini-systems: the Los Angeles Community College District boasts nine colleges serving over 125,000 students.

As an indicator of their commitment to autonomy, the governing boards of such systems might delegate some of their powers to institutional advisory boards. They might even be willing to divide themselves up in such a way as to permit each full-scale institution to be governed by its own board. The Carnegie Commission has recommended a move in this direction: "On balance, the advantages for establishment of a board for each campus, particularly if the campuses are large and if there is some differentiation in educational programs and characteristics of the campuses, would seem to be a better course than the establishment of a governing board with several major campuses under its jurisdiction." (Carnegie Commission, 1971, 108)

Conclusion

Interested citizens and educators in each state should get together to draw up a plan of action to influence the evolving state role in postsecondary education. At the very least, all will want to undertake the first step suggested above, the "de-mystification" of the power structure. Following that, a decision can be made as to what combinations or variations of the other alternatives are appropriate. This decision should be based not only upon the information gained during the examination of the existing state structure, but also on an assessment of the political climate and of the degree of commitment of the individuals and groups involved.

Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind in undertaking this project is that there is no single ideal way for a state to relate to its postsecondary institutions. In the final analysis, we may all end up agreeing with John Gardner that "The question of university autonomy can never be finally solved. It can only be lived with."

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